



# **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

A Meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** will be held in David Hicks 1  
- Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on  
**WEDNESDAY 18 JULY 2018 AT 7.00 PM**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Manjeet Gill', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Manjeet Gill  
Interim Chief Executive  
Published on 10 July 2018

The role of Overview and Scrutiny is to provide independent “critical friend” challenge and to work with the Council’s Executive and other public service providers for the benefit of the public. The Committee considers submissions from a range of sources and reaches conclusions based on the weight of evidence – not on party political grounds.

This meeting may be filmed for inclusion on the Council’s website.

Please note that other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting. The use of these images or recordings is not under the Council’s control.



# **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Our Vision**

A great place to live, an even better place to do business

## **Our Priorities**

Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential

Invest in regenerating towns and villages, support social and economic prosperity, whilst encouraging business growth

Ensure strong sustainable communities that are vibrant and supported by well designed development

Tackle traffic congestion in specific areas of the Borough

Improve the customer experience when accessing Council services

## **The Underpinning Principles**

Offer excellent value for your Council Tax

Provide affordable homes

Look after the vulnerable

Improve health, wellbeing and quality of life

Maintain and improve the waste collection, recycling and fuel efficiency

Deliver quality in all that we do

## MEMBERSHIP OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

### Councillors

Parry Batth (Chairman)	Philip Houldsworth (Vice-Chairman)	Andy Croy
Lindsay Ferris	Guy Grandison	Kate Haines
Mike Haines	Ken Miall	Ian Pittock
Malcolm Richards	Bill Soane	Shahid Younis

### Substitutes

Alistair Auty	Rachel Burgess	Carl Doran
John Jarvis	Clive Jones	Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
14.		<b>APOLOGIES</b> To receive any apologies for absence.	
15.		<b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</b> To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 June 2018.	5 - 10
16.		<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> To receive any declarations of interest.	
17.		<b>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</b> To answer any public questions.  A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice.  The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of this committee. Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Committee or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to <a href="http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions">www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions</a>	
18.		<b>MEMBER QUESTION TIME</b> To answer any Member questions.	
19.	None Specific	<b>LEADER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE UPDATES</b> To consider updates from the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive on challenges facing the Council and priorities for the year ahead. To question the Leader and Chief Executive using key lines of enquiry agreed by the Chairman.	11 - 18

20.

**UPDATE REPORTS FROM CHAIRMEN OR  
NOMINATED MEMBER OF THE OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

For the Chairman or nominated Member of the Committee to report back on its activities including any requests to undertake reviews.

**Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent**

A Supplementary Agenda will be issued by the Chief Executive if there are any other items to consider under this heading.

**CONTACT OFFICER**

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## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 20 JUNE 2018 FROM 7.00 PM TO 8.50 PM

### **Committee Members Present**

Councillors: Parry Batth (Chairman), Philip Houldsworth (Vice-Chairman), Andy Croy, Guy Grandison, Kate Haines, Mike Haines, Ken Miall, Malcolm Richards, Bill Soane and Shahid Younis

### **Officers Present**

Neil Carr, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist and Scrutiny Officer

### **1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

The Committee elected a Chairman for the 2018/19 Municipal Year.

**RESOLVED:** That Parry Batth be elected as Chairman of the Committee for the 2018/19 Municipal Year.

### **2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

The Committee appointed a Vice-Chairman for the 2018/19 Municipal Year.

**RESOLVED:** That Philip Houldsworth be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the 2018/19 Municipal Year.

### **3. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted by Lindsay Ferris and Ian Pittock.

### **4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23 May 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

### **7. MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

There were no Member questions.

### **8. SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT ON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

The Committee considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 11 to 22, which gave details of the Government's response to the House of Commons Select Committee report on Overview and Scrutiny in local government.

The report stated that the House of Commons Select Committee for Communities and Local Government had published its report on Overview and Scrutiny in local government in December 2017. A number of the Select Committee's recommendations called for Government action. The Government subsequently published its response to the Select Committee report in March 2018.

The key elements of the Government's response were summarised as:

- the Government planned to issue new Statutory Guidance to local authorities at the end of 2018;
- the Government agreed that Overview and Scrutiny Committees should report to the full Council meeting rather than the Executive, mirroring the relationship between Select Committees and Parliament;
- the Government accepted the need to limit the Executive's involvement in Overview and Scrutiny meetings and would make it clear that Executive Members should not participate in Scrutiny other than as witnesses;
- Government guidance would make it clear that Scrutiny support officers should be able to operate independently and provide impartial advice to Members;
- the Government aimed to continue discussions about the election rather than appointment of Overview and Scrutiny Chairmen, but it did not support a pilot scheme. The Government noted that Councils already had the power to elect Chairmen;
- the Government did not accept the recommendations relating to additional resources for the Overview and Scrutiny function, believing that these matters were best left to local discretion;
- the Government agreed that there should be clear and transparent oversight of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs).

The Scrutiny Officer gave details of recent developments relating to the publication of statutory guidance by Government later in 2018. In discussions with the Centre for Public Scrutiny the Government had indicated that it would be arranging engagement sessions and workshops with Scrutiny practitioners (including Members) in order to understand a range of views on potential improvements.

In the ensuing discussion Members raised the following points:

- Members welcomed the Government's proposed new Statutory Guidelines which would help to strengthen the operation of Overview and Scrutiny;
- Members welcomed the proposed Government stakeholder events aimed at seeking the views of Scrutiny practitioners and agreed that the Council should be represented;
- Members felt that the Council's Constitution Review Working Group should be notified that new guidelines would be circulated at the end of the year which would have implications relating to Overview and Scrutiny reporting arrangements and the involvement of Executive Members in the Scrutiny process;
- It was suggested that the Committee develop a set of performance indicators, based on best practice, which would allow Members to monitor the effectiveness of Overview and Scrutiny at the Council.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) the Government's response to the House of Commons Select Committee report be noted;
- 2) the Committee's comments on the proposals in the report be submitted to the Government, the Centre for Public Scrutiny and the Local Government Association;
- 3) Members wish to take part in the stakeholder engagement sessions relating to the emerging statutory guidance on Overview and Scrutiny, due to be held in the autumn of 2018;
- 4) the Constitution Review Working Group be notified about the Government's response to the Select Committee recommendations and the proposed publication of Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny, expected at the end of 2018;
- 5) the Committee receive a report on potential performance indicators to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny function.

## **9. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEMBER TRAINING**

The Committee considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 23 to 26, which gave details of the annual Scrutiny training session for Members. The training session was scheduled for 23 July 2018 (7pm). The session would provide an introduction to Overview and Scrutiny for new Members and a refresher for more experienced Members.

The Scrutiny Officer updated Members on the format of the training session and confirmed that it would include a presentation, small group discussions and practical exercises. The session would seek to emphasise the principles of effective Scrutiny:

- Providing critical friend challenge to the Executive and partner organisations;
- Reflecting and enabling the voice and concerns of residents and community groups;
- Members acting in the role of "independently minded governors" who lead and own the Scrutiny process;
- Driving improvement in public services and helping to find efficiencies and new ways of delivering services.

The Scrutiny Officer confirmed that the most suitable date for the training session was Monday 23 July 2018. He also reported that the Committee had received a Scrutiny request from Members relating to the operation of the Council's grass cutting service. It was suggested that the training session on 23 July could use the grass cutting issue as a basis for discussing the format and delivery of an effective Scrutiny review. This would allow Members to discuss the steps in undertaking a Scrutiny review such as developing the terms of reference, engagement with residents and other stakeholders, identifying key witnesses and drafting the final report.

During the ensuing discussion, Members raised the following points:

- It was felt that the training session should include a discussion on the interpretation of data and the process for setting performance indicators;

- It was noted that earlier updates on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Council programme had indicated that the investment in improved IT would deliver more timely and accurate performance data for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) the Member training session on Overview and Scrutiny be confirmed for 7pm on 23 July 2018;
- 2) the format of the session include small group discussions and exercises;
- 3) the training session use the Council's grass cutting service as an example of a Scrutiny review;
- 4) the training session include a section on the interpretation of performance data by Overview and Scrutiny Members and the process for developing "stretching" targets.

#### **10. CONSIDERATION OF THE CURRENT EXECUTIVE AND INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION FORWARD PROGRAMMES**

The Committee considered a copy of the Executive Forward Programme and Individual Executive Member Decision Forward Programme, as set out on Agenda pages 27 to 36.

In the ensuing discussion Members confirmed that the following items be added to the Overview and Scrutiny work programme for 2018/19:

- Financial position of the WBC owned companies;
- Duty to Co-operate: SHMA Methodology (Strategic Housing Market Assessment).

Members noted that the item "Sites to be Declared Surplus for Disposal" had already been included in the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) The Executive and Individual Executive Member Decision Forward Programmes be noted;
- 2) The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee Work Programme be amended to include the items highlighted by the Committee.

#### **11. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19**

The Committee considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 37 to 40, which gave details of its work programme for 2018/19.

The report reminded Members of the importance of effective work programming in prioritising issues of community concern, highlighting Scrutiny topics of most value and involving residents and community groups in the process.

The report also referred to a request for a Scrutiny review of the Council's grass cutting service. The new service had started in April 2016 following a joint procurement exercise

with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. The successful contractor was ISS Facility Services with the contract due to run to September 2026.

The Committee reviewed its work programme and highlighted the following issues:

- Members agreed that key lines of enquiry be developed in relation to the discussion at the next meeting with the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive;
- Following a request from Members, the Chairman agreed that an extraordinary meeting of the Committee be held on 1 August 2018 to consider the Council's response to its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the proposed Scrutiny review of grass cutting.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) the Committee's 2018/19 work programme, as amended, be confirmed;
- 2) key lines of enquiry be developed in advance of the next meeting in order to structure the discussions with the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive;
- 3) that Members suggest relevant questions to be included in the key lines of enquiry, including, for example: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Council and town centre regeneration;
- 4) an extraordinary meeting of the Committee be held on 1 August 2018 to consider a report on the Equality Act 2010 and the proposed Scrutiny review of the Council's grass cutting service;
- 5) the relevant Executive Members and Directors be invited to attend the extraordinary meeting on 1 August 2018.

## **12. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMMES**

The Committee considered work programmes of the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees, as set out on Agenda pages 41 to 50.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes for 2018/19, as amended, be noted;
- 2) that Overview and Scrutiny Committee Agenda aim to include a maximum of two or three substantive items in order to enable detailed Scrutiny to take place.

## **13. UPDATE REPORTS FROM CHAIRMEN OR NOMINATED MEMBER OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

The relevant Chairmen provided updates on recent issues considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and future Agenda items.

**RESOLVED:** That the update reports be noted.

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<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Leader and Chief Executive Updates</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 18 July 2018
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Andrew Moulton, Assistant Director, Governance
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Charlotte Haitham Taylor, Leader of the Council

## **OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

Overview and Scrutiny is one of the checks and balances which ensure that the Council and its partners make and implement effective decisions.

Discussions between the Committee and the Leader/Chief Executive are aimed at developing greater understanding of key issues over the year ahead and identifying issues which can benefit from challenge and/or support from Overview and Scrutiny.

The outcome will be greater clarity on the challenges facing the Council and a more robust decision making process.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) consider the submissions and responses from the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive;
- 2) identify any issues which will benefit from challenge and/or support from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees over the year ahead.

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

As part of the Overview and Scrutiny work programme for 2018/19 Members have identified the benefit of discussions with the Leader of the Council, Executive Members and the Chief Executive. The aim of the discussions is to increase awareness of the key policy and service issues over the year ahead and to identify areas where Overview and Scrutiny is available to provide effective challenge and support.

Members have agreed the principle that Overview and Scrutiny can add more value if it is proactive rather than reactive. This will be achieved if issues are scrutinised prior to implementation and emerging policies are considered at an earlier stage.

Councillor Charlotte Haitham Taylor (Leader of the Council) and Manjeet Gill (Chief Executive) have been invited to attend the meeting of the Committee on 18 July 2018. Key lines of enquiry (Annex A) have been developed to provide a framework for the discussions.

## **Background**

As part of the Overview and Scrutiny work programme for 2018/19 Members have identified the benefit of early discussions with the Leader of the Council, Executive Members and the Chief Executive. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees aim to facilitate this process by:

- considering issues which reflect local needs and concerns;
- prioritising topics for scrutiny which have the most impact or benefit;
- involving local residents and stakeholders;
- being flexible enough to respond to new or urgent issues.

The aim of the discussions with is to increase awareness of the key policy and service issues over the year ahead and to identify areas where Overview and Scrutiny is available to provide effective challenge and support. Members have agreed the principle that Overview and Scrutiny can add more value if it is proactive rather than reactive. This will be achieved if issues are scrutinised prior to implementation and emerging policies are considered at an earlier stage.

Councillor Charlotte Haitham Taylor (Leader of the Council) and Manjeet Gill (Chief Executive) have been invited to attend the meeting to discuss the key challenges facing the Council and key priorities for the year ahead. Executive Members will be invited to attend future meetings of the Committee.

### **Councillor Haitham Taylor is Leader of the Council**

The Leader's responsibilities include:

- Appointing Members to the Executive and making changes during the Municipal Year;
- Co-ordination of Strategy and overseeing the production of the Council Plan;
- Working with Executive Members to co-ordinate the Council's services and advising the Executive on progress against the Council's financial targets;
- Developing the Council's Communications and Marketing Strategy;
- Raising the Council's profile and promoting consultation, communication and participation with residents, community groups, businesses and the public sector;
- Overseeing the operation of Council-owned companies and their subsidiaries;
- Overseeing the Council's IT function.

### **Manjeet Gill is the Council's Interim Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive's role is to manage the day-to-day operation of the Council within the agreed policy framework and to work with the Leader, Members and partners to develop the Council's Vision, Priorities and Council Plan.

Annex A contains the key lines of enquiry agreed by the Chairman and submitted to the Leader and Chief Executive. Rather than develop separate lines of enquiry, it is suggested that the Leader and Chief Executive may wish to jointly respond to the questions set out in Annex A.

Each Key Line of Enquiry will be time limited in order to ensure that each issue is addressed at the meeting.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION**

***The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.***

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	NA	NA	NA
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	NA	NA	NA
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	NA	NA	NA

### **Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision**

To be considered as part of the discussions.

### **Cross-Council Implications**

The roles of Leader and Chief Executive have a wide impact across the organisation and across the Borough.

### **List of Background Papers**

NA

<b>Contact</b> Neil Carr	<b>Service</b> Democratic Services
<b>Telephone No</b> 0118 974 6058	<b>Email</b> neil.carr@wokingham.gov.uk
<b>Date</b> 9 July 2018	<b>Version No.</b> 1

### Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE)

#### Introductory Remarks (10 minutes)

The Leader of the Council and Chief Executive are invited to make any introductory remarks (up to 10 minutes) relating to progress and successes achieved by the Council over the past year.

The Committee will then use the Key Lines of Enquiry (below) to enquire about progress on key priorities, future plans, management of risk and emerging pressures.

#### KLOE 1 – Priorities (30 minutes)

At the meeting of the Committee in September 2017 Councillor Haitham Taylor outlined the following priorities for the Council:

- Local Plan Update.
- Improving communications.
- Engagement with the Government.
- Engagement with the business community.
- Supporting the more deprived parts of the Borough.
- Building capacity in the Council-owned companies.
- Making the Council self-sufficient.
- Highways investment to tackle congestion.
- Working with partners, including Towns/Parishes and the voluntary sector.
- Managing demand and risk relating to adult and children's services.

**Please provide a brief update of progress made against each one of these priorities over the past year.**

At the meeting in September 2017 Councillor Haitham Taylor stated that the two most pressing issues were:

- the Council's plans to meet housing needs and
- the achievement of financial stability.

**Please provide details of progress on tackling these two issues.**

**Are these still the two most important priorities for WBC?**

**Have any new priorities/pressures emerged over the past year?**

**In relation to the Council's financial stability, please provide an update on any emerging budget pressures and performance of the £100m investment fund approved by the Executive.**

**In relation to the growing demands relating to social care, what plans does the Council have to ensure adequate demand management and funding?**

**What financial and service impacts arise out of the Berkshire West Integrated Care System and how will progress be monitored?**

**In relation to the funding of social care and the move to Negative Revenue Support Grant, what progress is the Council making in lobbying the Government on these issues?**

#### **KLOE 2 – 21<sup>st</sup> Century Council (15 minutes)**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Council programme has been running for almost two years. Two of its key aims are to improve the customer experience and to make the Council more efficient and financially secure.

**Please comment on progress relating to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Council programme.**

**Please provide an update on the delays relating to the People's Services element of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Council programme and the timeframe for completion of the overall project.**

Concern has been expressed about the large number of interim managers/consultants employed by the Council – in relation to organisational stability, staff morale and cost.

**Please provide an update on the current level of interims/consultants and progress in filling key posts across the Council on a permanent basis.**

#### **KLOE 3 – Council Plan (15 minutes)**

At its meeting in May 2018 the Committee received an update on the development of the new Council Plan which indicated that the new Plan would be submitted to Council for approval early in 2019.

**Please provide an update on the development of the new Council Plan, including:**

- **Progress on discussions with key partners, stakeholders, Town and Parish Councils, community groups and residents.**

- **The development of priorities, performance indicators and stretching targets to underpin delivery of the Plan.**
- **Utilising the Council’s improved IT systems to deliver more accurate and timely performance reports to Members.**
- **The timeline for completing the Plan and consultation with WBC Members.**

#### **KLOE 4 – Town Centre Regeneration (15 minutes)**

Wokingham Town Centre regeneration is now well under way.

**Please provide a brief update of progress on the main elements of the regeneration programme.**

**Please comment on the management of key risks relating to the regeneration programme.**

The financial success of the regeneration programme relies to some extent on the sale of the new residential properties being built for sale in Wokingham town centre. The recent construction of Saxon Court in Denmark Street provides car parking on the ground floor which may be more attractive to the potential market.

**Please comment on progress relating to the residential elements of the regeneration programme and any emerging risks relating to the property market.**

**In relation to the Market Place improvements, what lessons have been learnt in relation to project planning and communication with shops, businesses and residents?**

#### **KLOE 5 – Narrowing the Gap in Educational Attainment (10 minutes)**

One of the Council’s key priorities is narrowing the gap in educational attainment for all vulnerable children, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

**What progress has the Council made in narrowing the gap in educational attainment for pupils at primary and secondary schools across the Borough?**

**How is progress on “narrowing the gap” reported to Members?**

**How does the Council’s progress on narrowing the gap compare with progress made by similar local authorities?**

#### **KLOE 6 – Community Safety and Fear of Crime (10 minutes)**

Members are aware of growing pockets of anti-social behaviour across the Borough.

**Please update the Committee on measures being taken with the police and other partners to tackle anti-social behaviour and reduce concern amongst residents and community groups.**

**KLOE 7 - Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes (10 minutes)**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committees are addressing the issues in their work programmes for 2018/19.

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee has agreed to undertake a Scrutiny review of the Council's grass cutting service, commencing in August 2018.

**Are you aware of any other services causing concern which would benefit from a Scrutiny review?**

The Government intends to publish updated Statutory Guidance on the operation of Overview and Scrutiny at the end of 2018.

**Do you have any thoughts on measures to make Overview and Scrutiny more effective and improve working relationships between Scrutiny and the Executive?**

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